



COUN 316: Parent and Family Dynamics

COURSE SYLLABUS: Fall 2026

Online Course

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Jenny Gagnon, M.Ed., LPC-S

Office Location: by appointment

Office Hours: by appointment

University Email Address: jenny.gagnon@etamu.edu

Preferred Form of Communication: email

Communication Response Time: 24 hours; M-F

COURSE INFORMATION

Required Textbook: Bigner, J. Gerhardt, C., (2019). *Parent-Child Relations: An Introduction to Parenting* (10th ed.). Pearson. ISBN: ISBN-13, 978-0134802237

Additional Readings:

American Counseling Association. (2014). ACA Codes of Ethics. Alexandria, VA: Author. Retrieved from <https://www.counseling.org/docs/default-source/default-document-library/ethics/2014-aca-code-of-ethics.pdf>

Recommended Textbook: American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association*, (7th ed.), <https://doi.org/10.1037/0000165-000>

Course Description

Parent & Family Dynamics. Three semester hours. This course is designed to reflect an overview of parent and family dynamics, an introduction to parent-child relations, diversity of the parental unit, and best practices in parenting. Students will be introduced to literature that describes the complexities of being a parent and the stages of parenthood. This is an experiential course that will emphasize practice as well as didactic information. Students will acquire an appreciation for learning about families and the complex interplay of biology and environmental context influencing the development, expression, and maintenance of the family unit. Students will develop a working knowledge of parent-child relations and understand how the process might shape both adaptive and maladaptive perspectives in the family unit.

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.



Student Learning Outcomes

Students who complete COUN 316 should demonstrate the following competencies:

1. Demonstrate familiarity with the dynamics and complexities of parenthood, and explain why it is a constantly evolving role.
2. Describe the factors that contribute to the parenthood role, and reflect on the relevance of each of these factors during the lifespan development of the parent.
3. Describe how counseling and psychosocial theories address parent-child relations.
4. Develop a working knowledge of parenting strategies by focusing on nurture and structure.
5. Demonstrate the ability to assess and identify ethnic diversity and family structures in the United States.
6. Explain the challenges of parenthood and the parenting styles that accompany each stage of the child's development (e.g. Toddlers, preschoolers, adolescents, and young adults).
7. Familiarize yourself with local resources that provide support for families in need and who are in crisis.

Grading

Final grades in this course will be based on the following scale:

A = 90%-100%

B = 80%-89%

C = 70%-79%

D = 60%-69%

F = 59% or Below

Assessments

Weights of the assessments in the calculation of the final letter grade.

Essay Assignments	30%
Participation/Discussions	40%
<u>Quizzes/Final Exam</u>	<u>30%</u>
TOTAL	100%



Counseling

EAST TEXAS A&M

Discussion/Participation Rubric

3 - Exceeds Expectations (90 points and above)	Proactive participation: leading, originating, informing, challenging contributions that reflect in-depth study, thought, and analysis of the topic under consideration. Clear application of learning. This does not mean dominating discussion or self-disclosure inappropriate to the circumstances. Full attendance in the discussion experience. No or one absence/no evident pattern of lateness.
2 – Meets Expectations (80-89 points)	Reactive participation: supportive, follow-up contributions that are relevant and of value, but rely on the leadership and study of others, or reflect opinion/personal self-disclosure rather than study, contemplation, synthesis, and evaluation. Two or three absences/no evident pattern of lateness.
1 – Minimally or Does Not Meet Expectations (79 points or less)	Passive participation: present, awake, alert, attentive, but not actively involved or invested; Or Uninvolved: content is accurate but simply repeated from text and does not show connection to learning or application/ examples, absent, present but not attentive, sleeping, texting/surfing, irrelevant contributions. More than three absences/pattern of lateness evident. *Reminder: D2L reports the hours you are logged in and working on assignments. You must meet the posted due dates in order to earn a passing grade in this course.

Essay Rubric

	1 – Minimally or Does Not Meet Expectations (79 points or less)	2 – Meets Expectation (80-89 points)	3 – Exceeds Expectation (90 points and above)
Essay Content	Missed basic concepts; writing is shallow and lacks organization and in-depth exploration of the topic.	Most basic concepts are covered, evidence of possessing knowledge about the topic, but missing one or two key points.	All basic concepts are covered, in depth review of related concepts, evidence of possessing knowledge about the topic without missing any key information.
APA Style and Grammar	Substantial APA errors (> 6 errors). Does not adhere to APA style; Poor grammar and sentence structure. Paper is disorganized; omission of in- text citations and references. Not indicative of university level work.	Some APA errors (4-6 errors). Mostly adheres to APA style; sufficient grammar and sentence structure; paper is fairly organized; Limited use of in-text citations and references. Representative of university level work.	Little to no errors (1-3 errors). Adheres to APA style; sufficient grammar and sentence structure; paper is well-organized; thorough and balanced use of in-text citations and references. Representative of university level work.

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.



COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Complete all required and supplemental readings and be prepared to discuss online.
2. Complete all class assignments within specified time frames.
3. No late assignments will be accepted.

Minimal Technical Skills Needed

This is an online course, and all instruction will be conducted in D2L. Students will be required to view/read lectures, participate in online discussions, and complete quizzes and assignments. You will need to utilize other technologies such as Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, etc.

Instructional Methods

This is an online course and utilizes D2L to engage students. Students are expected to regularly log into the course website to read, participate and complete all activities. The weekly assignments open on Monday and close the following Sunday to ensure timely completion.

Student Responsibilities or Tips for Success in the Course

As a student in this course, you are responsible for the active learning process. Expectations of Fall 2025:

1. You are expected to display professionalism at all times. Be respectful of your professor and peers. Be open to feedback, as you will receive this throughout the program.
2. Prepare for classes and discussions. Complete any and all readings in a timely manner.
3. Complete all assignments by the deadline.
4. Adhere to the university student code of conduct.
5. Participate. In the online format, you are expected to participate in all online discussions/activities. This is crucial to your learning.
6. All writing assignments must be done according to APA 7th edition standards.
7. Regularly check your University email. My suggestion is to check this at least once a day as your instructors and others from the department and University may contact you.
8. Begin your readings ASAP. Sometimes it may take more than one attempt to digest the material.
9. Deadlines are the last possible moment something is due—not the first moment to start. Work ahead. I realize this may not always be possible; however, when you can, do so.
10. Be open to the process. This degree takes time, work, effort, and growth.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

Browser support

D2L is committed to performing key application testing when new browser versions are released. New and updated functionality is also tested against the latest version of supported browsers. However, due to the frequency of some browser releases, D2L cannot guarantee that

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each browser version will perform as expected. If you encounter any issues with any of the browser versions listed in the tables below, contact D2L Support, who will determine the best course of action for resolution. Reported issues are prioritized by supported browsers and then maintenance browsers.

Supported browsers are the latest or most recent browser versions that are tested against new versions of D2L products. Customers can report problems and receive support for issues. For an optimal experience, D2L recommends using supported browsers with D2L products.

Maintenance browsers are older browser versions that are not tested extensively against new versions of D2L products. Customers can still report problems and receive support for critical issues; however, D2L does not guarantee all issues will be addressed. A maintenance browser becomes officially unsupported after one year.

Note the following:

- Ensure that your browser has JavaScript and Cookies enabled.
- For desktop systems, you must have Adobe Flash Player 10.1 or greater.
- The Brightspace Support features are now optimized for production environments when using the Google Chrome browser, Apple Safari browser, Microsoft Edge browser, Microsoft Internet Explorer browser, and Mozilla Firefox browsers.

Desktop Support

Browser	Supported Browser Version(s)	Maintenance Browser Version(s)
Microsoft® Edge	Latest	N/A
Microsoft® Internet Explorer®	N/A	11
Mozilla® Firefox®	Latest, ESR	N/A
Google® Chrome™	Latest	N/A
Apple® Safari®	Latest	N/A

Tablet and Mobile Support

Device	Operating System	Browser	Supported Browser Version(s)
Android™	Android 4.4+	Chrome	Latest

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Device	Operating System	Browser	Supported Browser Version(s)
Apple	iOS®	Safari, Chrome	The current major version of iOS (the latest minor or point release of that major version) and the previous major version of iOS (the latest minor or point release of that major version). For example, as of June 7, 2017, D2L supports iOS 10.3.2 and iOS 9.3.5, but not iOS 10.2.1, 9.0.2, or any other version. Chrome: Latest version for the iOS browser.
Windows	Windows 10	Edge, Chrome, Firefox	Latest of all browsers, and Firefox ESR.

- You will need regular access to a computer with a broadband Internet connection. The minimum computer requirements are:
 - 512 MB of RAM, 1 GB or more preferred
 - Broadband connection required courses are heavily video intensive
 - Video display capable of high-color 16-bit display 1024 x 768 or higher resolution
- You must have a:
 - Sound card, which is usually integrated into your desktop or laptop computer
 - Speakers or headphones.
 - *For courses utilizing video-conferencing tools and/or an online proctoring solution, a webcam and microphone are required.
- Both versions of Java (32 bit and 64 bit) must be installed and up to date on your machine. At a minimum Java 7, update 51, is required to support the learning management system. The most current version of Java can be downloaded at: [JAVA web site](http://www.java.com/en/download/manual.jsp)
<http://www.java.com/en/download/manual.jsp>
- Current anti-virus software must be installed and kept up to date.

Running the browser check will ensure your internet browser is supported.

Pop-ups are allowed.

JavaScript is enabled.

Cookies are enabled.



- You will need some additional free software (plug-ins) for enhanced web browsing. Ensure that you download the free versions of the following software:
 - [Adobe Reader](https://get.adobe.com/reader/) <https://get.adobe.com/reader/>
 - [Adobe Flash Player](https://get.adobe.com/flashplayer/) (version 17 or later) <https://get.adobe.com/flashplayer/>
 - [Adobe Shockwave Player](https://get.adobe.com/shockwave/) <https://get.adobe.com/shockwave/>
 - [Apple Quick Time](http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/) <http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/>
- At a minimum, you must have Microsoft Office 2013, 2010, 2007 or Open Office. Microsoft Office is the standard office productivity software utilized by faculty, students, and staff. Microsoft Word is the standard word processing software, Microsoft Excel is the standard spreadsheet software, and Microsoft PowerPoint is the standard presentation software. Copying and pasting, along with attaching/uploading documents for assignment submission, will also be required. If you do not have Microsoft Office, you can check with the bookstore to see if they have any student copies.

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

Note: Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a TAMUC campus open computer lab, etc.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>



COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures/Policies

Students are expected to log in to D2L for all assignments. No late assignments will be accepted.

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

University Specific Procedures

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the [Student Guidebook](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx>

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

East Texas A&M Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage and [Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf>

Academic Integrity

Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are required to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. Use of A.I. content as your own, and improperly citing or failing to cite a quote or reference is academic dishonesty, and will result in disciplinary action up to and including failing the assignment, and in severe cases, failing the course and a recommendation for further university disciplinary response. If you have questions about requirements or academic integrity, please, always contact your instructor first. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty, see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

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<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/documents/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyForm.pdf>

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/academics/graduateschool/faculty/GraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyFormold.pdf>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

AI use in course [Draft 2, May 25, 2023]

Texas A&M University-Commerce acknowledges that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, ChatBots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text, or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words, as determined by the instructor of the course.

Any use of such software must be documented. Any undocumented use of such software constitutes an instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism).

Individual instructors may disallow entirely the use of such software for individual assignments or for the entire course. Students should be aware of such requirements and follow their instructors' guidelines. If no instructions are provided the student should assume that the use of such software is disallowed.

In any case, students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit, regardless of whether they used an AI, in any way. This specifically includes cases in which the AI plagiarized another text or misrepresented sources.

13.99.99.R0.03 Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty

13.99.99.R0.10 Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty

Students with Disabilities-- ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

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Email: studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

Nondiscrimination Notice

Texas A&M University-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

East Texas A&M Supports Students' Mental Health

The university aims to provide students with essential knowledge and tools to understand and support mental health. As part of our commitment to your well-being, we offer access to Telus Health, a service available 24/7/365 via chat, phone, or webinar. Scan the QR code to download the app and explore the resources available to you for guidance and support whenever you need it.





Department or Accrediting Agency Required Content

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

This outline is subject to change.

Notification will be given in advance should due dates or requirements need to be adjusted.

Week 1 – Aug. 20 th	Chapter 1
Week 2 – Aug. 24 th	Chapter 2
Week 3 – Aug. 31 st	Chapter 3
Week 4 – Sept. 7 th	Chapter 4
Week 5 – Sept. 14 th	Chapter 5
Week 6 – Sept. 21 st	Chapter 6
Week 7 – Sept. 28 th	Chapter 7
Week 8 – Oct. 5 th	Chapter 8
Week 9 – Oct. 12 th	Chapter 9
Week 10 – Oct. 19 th	Chapter 10
Week 11 – Oct. 26 th	Chapter 11
Week 12 – Nov. 2 nd	Chapter 12
Week 13 – Nov. 9 th	Chapter 13
Week 14 – Nov. 16 th	Chapter 14 and 15
Week of Nov. 23 rd	Thanksgiving Break
Week 15 – Nov. 30 th	Final Exam Review
Week 16 – Dec. 7 th – Dec. 11 th	Final Exam

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